38 Marlboro Hill
St. Johns Wood
6 May 1878

Dear Madam

Your letter of the 6th has but this moment reached me, and I hasten to thank you at once, for letting me know that foundation there was for the first of the two "Athenaeum" paragraphs I sent you, and also to assure you that no expression of your feeling or judgment on such a subject could possibly have rendered you one whit the less to be respected in my eyes. I consulted and took part in the

publication of those to me
sacred letters in full
consideration, and with
the knowledge that I should
have many people hostile
against me; and if you
as Keats's sister, had yourself
written to the newspapers
expressing disapprobation, I
could say with perfect truth
that my feelings towards you
would have been no less
friendly and respectful than
it is. only I should have
felt, and do feel, grieved at the thought
of the pain you might
have occasioned those
who have thought less about
the matter than it has been
my duty and my necessity to

do, have not understood that this question of publishing your brother's letters was not one as between speech and silence, but as between perfect speech and imperfect speech; and in deciding for perfect speech I regarded the matter not only from posterity's point of view as I conceive it, but also from Keats's point of view! I asked myself "If Keats had had to choose between total oblivion and giving his story to posterity, which would he have chosen?" And I could not bring myself to answer but that he would not have chosen

oblivion. Then I looked at all it have been told about him, and saw only half a story, inaccurate in many particulars, and not! - a thousandth times not; - portraying the man's soul as it was. these letters, to my mind, set him right with posterity; and thus it came to be to me, a sacred duty to take all the risk of personal opprobrium that might attach to counselling and abetting their publication. The only thing I have to regret is that you, who have a right to a strong feeling in the matter, have been

just to prove, even though as I hope, that has passed by; for I cannot expect to be in any way disturbed by the ravings of fools men here or in America who care no more in reality for your brother's works and his dear memory than they do for the sacred and eternal truths of God's universe whereof his love was one.

I pray him to explain myself thus far, I may perhaps venture to entreat for him that one half of my letter remains unanswered. I fully appreciate

The delicacy of your motives
in not authorizing it till you
knew how I might reply
the answer to the other half
but now I wait in the hope
of an early reply to the
rest.

Believe me &c
dear Madame
Very sincerely & respectfully yours
[illegible]

P.S.

In explanation of a point that
may perhaps seem to need explaining
I may say that there were strong
reasons, quite unconnected with
your family, for keeping the publication
of the letters absolutely secret until
they were out; but these I should
much prefer to leave to be detailed

Yours Linda, in case you have
any curiosity on the subject.